

25 March 96

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

TO: DDIR
cc: Jim C, Judi

~~DRAFT~~

Bill, CIA tells me
that DCI is/this on
25 March, same date as letter on this subject to Dir (which I think you
have). Will send you an e-mail to summarize progress on the
conference. Love Ben 28 March 96

(these letters were
my idea; esp.
important to get FBI
involved)

The Honorable Louis B. Freeh
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Director Freeh:

In July 1995 we declassified the first of the "Venona" translations of Soviet intelligence cables from the 1940s. As I stated at the public ceremony at CIA Headquarters last July, the Intelligence Community does not "own" national security secrets, but rather holds them in trust for the American people. I am sure you will agree that the National Security Agency's latest release of Venona cables is the most exciting yet, and should help dispel misunderstandings about a controversial era of American history.

NSA and CIA are now organizing the scholarly conference on Venona that I promised to sponsor at our ceremony last July. The CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI) has taken the lead in planning the upcoming conference, and is receiving the most extensive and cordial cooperation from NSA in preparing a volume of declassified Venona documents to be released at that event.

I am relating this to you because I am sure that you want the outstanding work of the Bureau's agents and leaders in the Venona program to receive the credit that it so richly deserves. Venona was a success for the entire Intelligence Community, but it would not have been possible without the hard work of the FBI. Although I can assure you that the NSA and CIA experts preparing the declassified Venona volume and the upcoming conference are doing their best to tell the whole story of the Venona program, you and I know that only the Bureau can do full justice to its crucial role.

APPROVED FOR
RELEASE DATE:
18-Sep-2009

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The Honorable Louis B. Freeh

It might be helpful at this point for you to designate a contact for Brian Latell at CSI. Brian could then discuss with your representative the best way in which the Bureau could participate in preparing the Venona conference and volume. As always, I would be happy to discuss with you any questions or concerns that you might have about the project.

Sincerely,

John Deutch
Director of Central Intelligence